

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 14 is amended and claims 15 and 16 are new. Support for the amendment to claim 14 can be found at least at page 7, lines 11-23 of the specification. Support for new claims 15 and 16 can be found at least at page 7, lines 11-23, and page 9, lines 11-17 of the specification. No new matter is added.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication that claim 6, 7 and 10-14 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. However, Applicants submit that the pending claims are allowable for at least the following reasons.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-3 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Japanese Patent Application Publication No. 10-280990 to Kawai in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,519,513 to Nakagawa et al. (hereinafter Nakagawa). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Both Kawai and Nakagawa, individually or in a reasonable combination, fail to disclose a device wherein, when the temperature of a catalytic apparatus arranged in an engine exhaust system is higher than a predetermined temperature in a vehicle deceleration, a first motor generator connected with the vehicle drive shaft is operated as a generator that charges an electrical accumulator, as recited in claim 1. The Office Action admits Kawai fails to disclose a motor/generator that is operated as a generator to charge an electrical accumulator. However, the Office Action further alleges that Nakagawa remedies the deficiencies of Kawai. Applicants respectfully disagree with this assertion.

Applicants respectfully submit that Nakagawa at least fails to disclose a generator that charges an electrical accumulator when the temperature of the catalytic apparatus arranged in the engine exhaust system is higher than a predetermined temperature in a vehicle

deceleration, as recited in claim 1. Particularly, Nakagawa merely describes a motor/generator 3 that charges a battery 11 while decelerating a vehicle (see Nakagawa, col. 9, lines 14-18). Nakagawa only describes charging battery 11 at a time when the required drive force is not larger than 0 and the vehicle speed is not lower than 0 (see Nakagawa, col. 9, lines 14-18). Thus, Nakagawa fails to disclose a generator that charges an electrical accumulator when the temperature of a catalytic apparatus arranged in an engine exhaust system is higher than a predetermined temperature in a vehicle deceleration, as recited in claim 1.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is patentable over Kawai and Nakagawa. Further, it is respectfully submitted that claims 2, 3 and 8 are patentable at least in view of the patentability of claim 1, from which they depend, as well as for the additional features they recite. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejects claims 4, 5 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Kawai in view of Nakagawa and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,569,055 to Urasawa et al. (Urasawa). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

This rejection is premised upon the presumption that Kawai and Nakagawa disclose all the features of claim 1, from which claims 4, 5 and 9 depend. Because, as discussed above, Kawai and Nakagawa do not disclose all the features of claim 1. Further, Urasawa does not remedy the deficiencies of Kawai and Nakagawa. Thus claims 4, 5 and 9 are patentable at least in view of the patentability of claim 1, as well as for the additional features they recite. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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